- Join Chamber of Commerce Emil Lyons May 31st
- House parties

Be My Lyons

BILL OF WRONGS

On December 15, 1991, America will celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights. As lesbian and gay Americans, we are taking this occasion to remind our fellow citizens that many of us live under a Bill of Wrongs. Lesbians and gay men are denied fundamental rights solely on the basis of sexual orientation. In a country founded on equality and freedom, lesbians and gay men are treated as inherently unequal. Gay men and women face the following forms of legalized discrimination, amounting to a Bill of Wrongs:

First: Lesbians and gay men shall be subject to discrimination in hiring, promotion and other aspects of employment.

Second: Lesbians and gay men shall be subject to discrimination in housing.

Third: Lesbians and gay men shall not be permitted to protect their country by serving in the nation's armed forces.

Fourth: Lesbians and gay men shall be denied the right to marry or to have their committed relationships lawfully recognized.

Fifth: Lesbians and gay men shall be denied the right to adopt and retain custody of their children to the same extent as heterosexuals.

Sixth: Lesbians and gay men shall not be permitted to protect their committed partners under employee health insurance plans, and shall be denied tax benefits taken for granted by married heterosexual couples.

Seventh: Lesbians and gay men shall be discriminated against, and their committed relationships shall not be recognized, for purposes of immigration into these United States.

Eighth: Artistic expressions by gay and lesbian artists shall be denied the support of public bodies and governmental institutions.

Ninth: Lesbians and gay men shall be denied the right of privacy, and shall be subject to discriminatory treatment under state law.

Tenth: Lesbians and gay men shall not be entitled to live freely and openly to the same extent as other citizens, but shall lawfully be subjected to abuse, harassment and threats of violence from anti-gay groups, public officials and private individuals.

All citizens deserve to be treated equally — with equal respect, dignity and freedom from arbitrary discrimination. Lesbians and gay men deserve the same basic rights — to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — as other Americans. No one should be made to suffer based on sexual orientation. We call on all who believe in liberty and justice for all to help right this Bill of Wrongs.

COLORADO FOR FAMILY VALUES
stands for
FREEDOM, LIBERTY, AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

That's why they want Article 2 of the Colorado Constitution amended to read:

> No protected status based on homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual orientation.
>
> Neither the State of Colorado, through any of its branches or departments, nor any of its agencies, political sub-divisions, municipalities, or school districts, shall enact, adopt, or enforce any statute, regulation, ordinance, or policy whereby homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual orientation, conduct, practices, or relationships shall constitute or otherwise be the basis of, or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status or claim of discrimination.

What's wrong with this?

1. This measure specifically singles out gay and lesbian people for blatant discrimination and, in so doing, legalizes second-class citizenship. Its acknowledged intent is to preclude any future civil rights protection, and eliminate all existing civil rights protection, of gay and lesbian citizens. Discrimination against any group is morally wrong and counter to the ideals of a democratic society.

2. This measure legitimizes prejudice. It codifies the assertion that gay and lesbian people are inferior, even dangerously so, and deserve specific legal condemnation. Stigmatizing an entire group, rather than evaluating members of the group as individuals, is the essence of prejudice. Once prejudice against any group is legitimized, there will be no limits to the expansion of prejudice against other groups.

3. Enactment of this measure deprives home rule cities of their authority in the area of civil rights. This result runs counter to 90 years of Colorado constitutional history. A city's home rule authority is a precious part of its independence under our state Constitution. If this measure were adopted, every home rule city in Colorado would suffer from this infringement on its constitutional independence.

4. This measure is blatantly unconstitutional. It violates both the right of gay and lesbian people to equal protection of the law and the right of state and local legislators to free speech. Enactment of this measure would involve the state of Colorado in expensive, and ultimately futile, litigation to defend the measure from constitutional scrutiny.

YOUR FREEDOM IS THREATENED -- GET INVOLVED!

Talk to your friends and neighbors. Write the newspapers. Explain the issue.

For more information, contact Equal Protection of Colorado, (303) 839-5540.